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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003255

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TALABANI ACCUSES TURKISH MILITARY OF UNDERMINING  
PEACE TALKS WITH OCALAN

REF: ANKARA 4999

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Daniel Speckhard for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) In separate meetings on August 30 and September 2, President Talabani updated the Charge d'Affaires on steps taken by the Government of Iraq (GOI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to push the PKK toward a ceasefire.

Charge began the meeting on August 30 by raising the spate of attacks in Turkey the previous week, all attributed to the PKK or its front offices, and questioning how this reconciled with the supposed interest in a cease-fire. (NOTE: Charge was referring to the spate of attacks and bombings from August 21-28. See Ankara 4999. END NOTE) Talabani noted that the PKK denied responsibility for those attacks, but eventually conceded that they may have been involved. Talabani accused the new chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS), General Yasar Buyukanit, of trying to cause more conflict between the PKK and the Government of Turkey (GOT). Talabani darkly referred to a linkage between Buyakanit and complicity in a car bombing in southern Turkey directed against the Turkish Kurds several years ago, and complained that the Turkish military leadership is actively undermining efforts to resolve the PKK conflict. When asked, Talabani claimed that the Turkish General Staff needed a threat to justify their budgets and significance to Turkish security.

12. (C) Despite the Charge's urging, Talabani demurred on taking more steps to cut off supply routes to the PKK or to encircle PKK camps with peshmerga forces. Likewise, he delayed making more public statements condemning the PKK as a terrorist organization, citing the need to give a few more days to seeing if his efforts to encompass them to "lay down their arms" would produce results. Talabani accused the Turks of trying to undermine the process by pushing for too much too quickly, and stated that Ankara does not understand the art of convincing others, only the use of power. Talabani then passed to the Charge a letter he had recently received from the PKK leadership, explaining that the reason they had not called for a ceasefire yet was twofold: first, it was difficult to mobilize such a broad-based organization so quickly and second, the PKK had no confidence that the Turks would not continue to use force against them even if they observed a cease-fire. (NOTE: See full text of letter below, paragraph 4. END NOTE)

13. (C) Talabani asked the Charge to press for the immediate arrival to the region of the new U.S. Envoy for Countering the PKK, and to put pressure on Ankara to allow Turkish Kurd political leader Dr. Ahmad Turk or one of his lawyers to see imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. Talabani complained that the GOT was divided internally on this issue: while Prime Minister Erdogan, Foreign Minister Gul, and the Turkish

military intelligence organization agreed on the need for Ocalan to meet with either Turk or his civil defense attorneys, the TGS was blocking access to Ocalan. In a subsequent meeting on 2 September, however, Talabani informed the Charge that the GOT will permit a visit with Ocalan in prison. Talabani expressed hope that this meeting would result in Ocalan publicly declaring a ceasefire, which the "people in the mountain" would hopefully accept. Talabani promised to confirm the information for the Charge.

14. (U) Begin Text:

Mr. President,

We have received your letter dated August 2, 2006 and realized that it is our duty to express our sincere thanks for the interest you have expressed. I met with Mr. Mohammad Ameen Benjewini who conveyed your valuable opinion. We discussed the issues which you tried to draw our attention to. But I felt that it is better to express, our positions and views in regard to finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issue in northern Kurdistan, in this letter.

We hereby assert that the opinions you have outlined in this letter, and what Mr. Benjewini conveyed, are valuable opinions which we take seriously and with due respect. We would like to inform you that this matter was included in our agenda from the time Mr. Mustafa Sayyid Qadir communicated your proposals when we met with him few months ago, and when our representative met with him at a later date. These opinions and ideas had the greatest influence on our decision to introduce this latest initiative.

In general and through what we have announced, we would have

BAGHDAD 00003255 002 OF 002

thus entered a peaceful stage in our struggle which includes the possibility of reaching a ceasefire if the elements of confidence and positive steps were exhibited by the other side. Although your opinions on this subject matter are accepted by us, nonetheless we haven't announced an immediate ceasefire for reasons I will attempt to sum up in two key points:

First: Our movement is broad based and includes many institutions, parties, and organizations; each having its special organizational identity. Consequently we face many difficulties in persuading the components of the movement and its popular base of the necessity to unilaterally introduce an initiative in this respect, particularly when there are no positive signs from the other party. And if we attempt to proceed with such a step regardless of this fact, our organizational structure will face considerable problems.

Second: In previous stages of our struggle, we experimented with this a number of times. Our experiments in this respect confirm that if the initiative lacks the agreement of the two parties, it will fail. For example; what would a unilateral ceasefire mean if units of the Turkish Army continue in their military operations which today cover all areas of northern Kurdistan?

The continuation of the Turkish Army military operations will certainly lead to the outbreak of fighting and losses on both sides. Therefore, I believe that halting Turkish Army military operations is needed, as one of the most important prerequisites for the success of the peaceful process.

We are confident that through our declared initiative, we have achieved the larger segment of your proposals and opinions and have carried out the important part of our responsibilities within the framework of our special circumstances. And through the historic role that you are playing and your position which we cherish, I once again express my confidence and hope that you will play the role which we expect you to play in completing what remains.

We appreciate the achievements of our people in southern Kurdistan and we are ready to exert all sacrifices required to defend them. But we also realize that Kurdistan has been transformed into a divided reality, against the will of the Kurds. Therefore, a solution that is limited to one part of the homeland will continue to face problems and challenges with the various powers, when solution is absent in the other parts. Consequently, we believe that a solution that deals with the issue in all parts of Kurdistan will be the sole assurance for the protection of southern Kurdistan from facing problems. Thus we must play roles that will impose on the powers that govern the other parts of Kurdistan to recognize the existence of the Kurds and to solve their issue peacefully. With that, the potentials and achievements of our people in the south will be used to find a solution to the issues of the Kurds in other parts.

As for us, we are discussing the initiative which we launched and the declaration which we issued, meaning our entry in the ceasefire phase. Our main goal is to reach a process of true silencing of weapons as soon as possible. The issue here is in dire need of positive echoes from the Turkish side and speed in carrying out the anticipated steps and for the United States of America to fulfill its responsibilities and demonstrate them on the ground. On this basis we will be ready to do our share of tasks and on the basis of our belief that you will exert more efforts to find a formula that the various parties, the USA, Turkey, and the PKK, agree to, and on the basis of our confidence in your feeling of responsibility concerning the issues of the Kurds in the other parts, we present to you our greetings and best wishes for good health.

//signed//, Chairman of the Executive Council, Democratic  
Confederation of Kurdistan  
Murad Qraielan  
August 25, 2006  
END TEXT  
SPECKHARD